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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on cataloging and classification, which are the most time consuming of library operations, requiring highly trained staff and involving considerable expense, to provide an overview of the concepts and considerations for centralized cataloging and interlibrary loans. Centralized cataloging is defined as a cooperative arrangement for the preparation of bibliographic records by one agency to which all cooperating agencies may have access. Advantages cited include high quality professional work, increased processing, decrease in unit costs, and improved dissemination; level of cooperation may vary, e.g., small intragroup libraries in a community, larger regional organizations, commercial arrangements with suppliers, and national union catalogs like those published by the Library of Congress. Two differing ideologies are discussed, one concerned with the end use as a reliable searching tool, and the other as a systematic record of a library's holdings. The important role of the computer in centralization is indicated, including its use to standardize ordering and library collections and to facilitate interlibrary loan. Six references are listed. (EAA)

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THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF CENTRALIZED CATALOGUING
AND INTERLIBRARY LOANS

by

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In this paper, I shall attempt to give a brief overview of the concepts and considerations for centralized cataloguing and inter-library loans.

Cataloguing and classification have been singled out in studies of library operations as some of the most time-consuming services, requiring highly trained staff and thus involving high expenses for individual libraries.

The need to consolidate and to standardize cataloguing has long been recognized and this paper can only mention the well-known attempts by Charles C. Jewett and the Smithsonian Institution in 1853, Charles Amy Cutter by the end of the 19th century and finally the Library of Congress's first offerings of printed cards in 1901 under its distinguished librarian Herbert Putnam. This service established the Library of Congress's leadership role as the nation's authority for cataloguing standards. The impact of technology, particularly the generation of machine-readable cataloguing data (MARC) and the emerging networks, have profoundly changed operations and the concept of centralized cataloguing for the 1980's and beyond.

Let us consider the rationale for centralized cataloguing: We can define centralized cataloguing as a cooperative arrangement, by which the preparation of the bibliographic record is being done by one library or agency at one place, and to which participating members have access by whatever means available.

The results of centralized cataloguing are : high professional quality of work at one place without duplication by other libraries, increased volume in processing, decreased unit costs and widest possible distribution.

Types of centralized cataloguing services may vary from straight cataloguing to more complex technical functions as rising demands of today show.

The levels of such centralized cataloguing may vary - with one library participating at several of them-: First, an Intra-system, such as one within a public library and its branches, a school district,

or an academic library with institutes and departments: second, a Regional system- such as a state library system, or any geographical arrangement; third, a commercial arrangement with a commercial supplier; fourth, at the national level, for instance through the Library of Congress, with the possible results of National Union Catalogs, and, fifth, at the international level- as envisaged through Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC).

Two institutes on the nature and future of the catalog held in 1975 and 1977 revealed two ideologically different viewpoints as to the role of the catalog.

In his paper on the ideology of bibliographic cataloguing, Seymour Lubetky traces the evolution of the catalog from an inventory list to a guide to the resources of the library as giving "a bibliographically integrated picture of the resources of a library". (Lubertsky, 1979 p.5ff.) He warns that "in our preoccupation with technology we must not lose sight of the ideology of the catalog: In our fascination with the versatility of certain tools, we should not forget the ends to which they are to be applied." (p.5). His view is adopted by Michael Malinconico who presents eloquent arguments for "the integrity of the catalog and for the importance of the computer being an integral component in controlling cataloguing data." (The Nature of the Catalog, p.120).

Frederick G. Kilgour, on the other hand, defines a catalog "as a systematic record of the holdings of a collection, its purpose being to enable a user of the collection to find the physical location of information in the collection." (Kilgour, 1979, p.34). He identifies seven criteria for the evaluation of catalogs, particularly applicable to online computerized catalogs. They are : 1. Usability- that is a design oriented towards the library user rather than based on bibliographic principles. 2. Availability- such as access to catalog information at places outside the library; 3. Completeness and Up-to-Dateness- an online catalog can have current information available within seconds after completion of cataloguing; 4. Personalization- Online catalogs can be designed for individual users; 5. Size- an online catalog can be personalized even though it is huge; 6. Flexibility- The online catalog "has the flexibility required for transition from classical hardcopy catalogs to electronic display." (p.40), and, 7. the last criteria, Productivity- which means that productivity of library staff and users will be enhanced by use of the online catalog.

Thus, whilst Mr Lubetsky stresses the integrity of the catalog as a bibliographic tool, Mr. Kilgour, "the modern father of networking" argues against the traditional rules of cataloguing which aimed at bringing together all of the works of an author under the same heading. (The Nature and Future of the Catalog, p. 120).

Any consideration of centralized cataloguing and cooperative endeavors has therefore first to define the objectives and priorities for individual institutions participating in a system or network. Dagmar Schmidmaier in a paper on regional processing centers in Australia discusses the points to be considered and that it is essential to decide on objectives and priorities for a library first. (Schmidmaier, p.98 ff).

She goes on to a second point to be considered, that is to recognize the needs of the average public library as well as that of the large research library whose cataloguing needs may differ from a simple finding list to a bibliographic tool for research.

As a third point she describes as "Type and Levels of Development", that it is necessary to emphasize the objectives of systems at the national, regional and local levels and to encourage development at all levels "because libraries will continue to have needs at these various levels." (p.99). Her recommendations are well articulated:

"At the national level, an on-line bibliographic system should provide access to all bibliographic records; to establish standards and be involved in long range planning, research, and consultancy. At the regional level, systems should be available to provide more effective service, e.g., improved access via computerized central cataloguing, contain costs by cooperation, provide more effective record-keeping procedures and stimulate resource sharing and interlibrary lending. At the simplest level, a regional processing centre could provide a centralized cataloguing and ...processing service...."
(Schmidmaier, p.99).

Centralized cataloguing has increased in the last decade due to computer-based cataloguing systems and we have witnessed a steady growth of regional and national bibliographic networks. (Hickey, 1979, O. 102). In the United States we are experiencing competing developments of several major networks, and in many parts of the world centralized cataloguing has been firmly established and is well developed. Standardization continues to be a vital issue, with new editions of classification schemes, such as the 19th of the Dewey Decimal Classification and the second of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules affecting

cataloguing procedures. To quote Doralyn Hickey: "The tension between the values of uniformity, on the one hand, and those of spontaneity and flexibility, on the other, continues to occasion much debate among cataloguers." (Hickey, 1980, p.122). Solutions to these problems are still complex and difficult.

Another result of centralized cataloguing and the production of union lists is an increase in interlibrary loan through the availability of records and the speed up in communications. (Avram, 1977, p.25). The tremendous growth of such activities is creating various problems for the lending libraries, who have to charge fees to absorb costs.

In conclusion one should point out that continuous developments in centralized cataloguing and standardization of records on various levels are a prerequisite for the eventual Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC), and interlibrary access of material should contribute to the realization of Universal Availability of Publications (UAP).

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